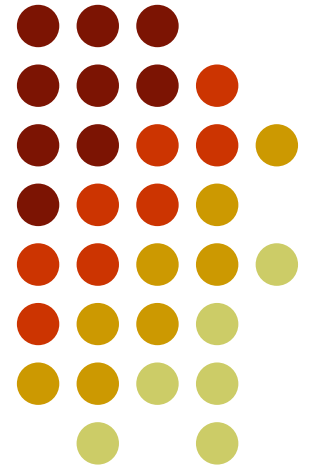


# Teaching Government Information

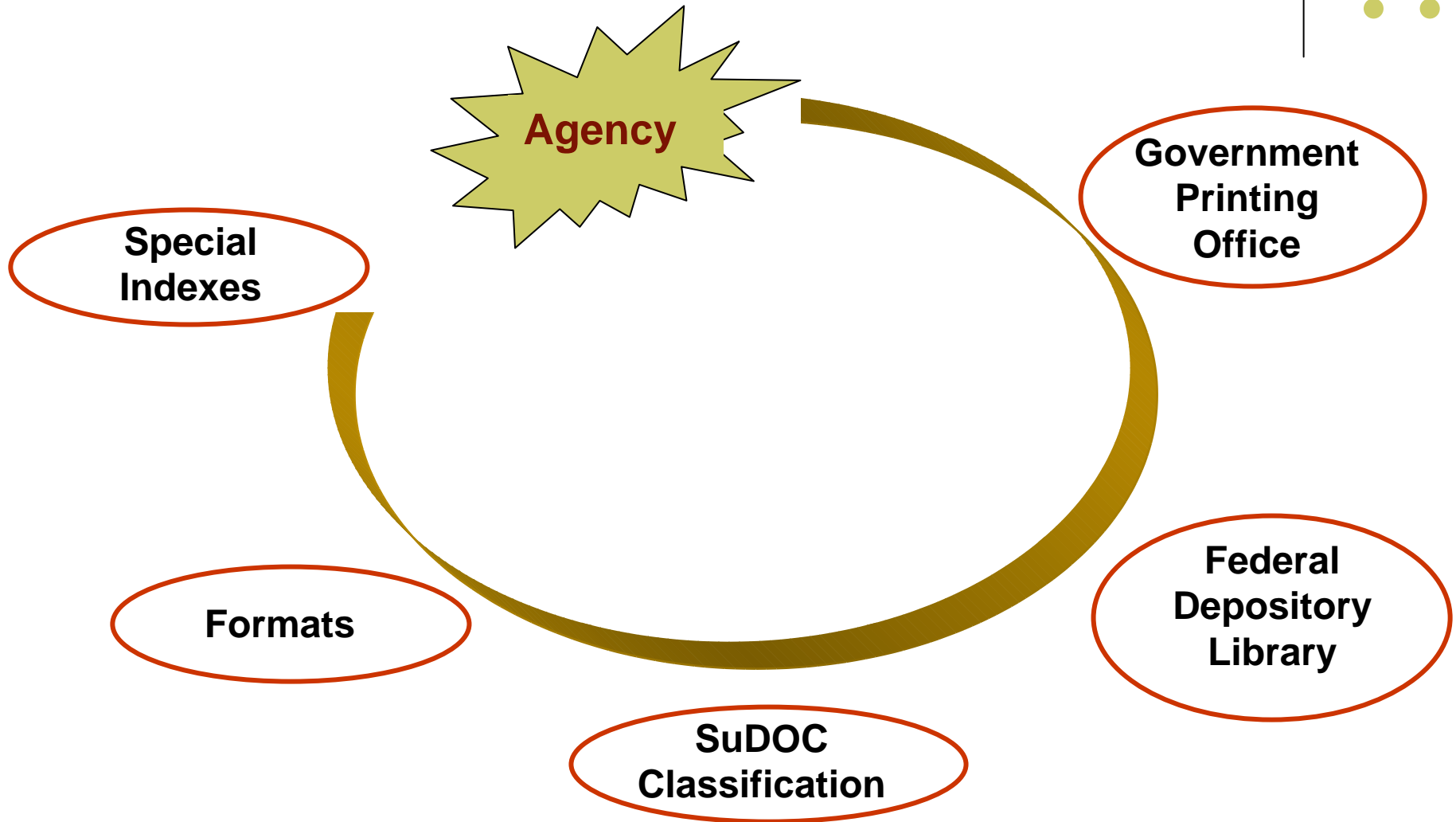
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Comparing a Traditional Approach  
and the Information Cycle

Stephen Woods  
The Pennsylvania State University



# Traditional Model





# Traditional Model

How do we  
Access  
Government  
information?

What is  
Government  
Information?

How do we  
Acquire  
government  
Information?

How do we Organize  
government information?



**Focus is on the Publication  
Process!**



# Instructional Goals (ACRL)

- Knows how information is formally and informally produced, organized, and disseminated (Outcome 1.2.a)
- Identifies the value and differences of potential resources in a variety of formats (e.g., multimedia, database, website, data set, audio/visual, book) (Outcome 1.2.c)

# Instructional Goals (ACRL), Continued



- Uses various classification schemes and other systems (e.g., call number systems or indexes) to locate information resources within the library or to identify specific sites for physical exploration. (Outcome 2.3.b)
- Uses various search systems to retrieve information in a variety of formats. (Outcome 2.3.a)

# Instructional Design

## Question - Answer



- What is Government Information?
- How is it disseminated?
- What subjects does it cover?
- What formats are disseminated?
- How is government information organized?
- What tools can be used?

See Separate Handout

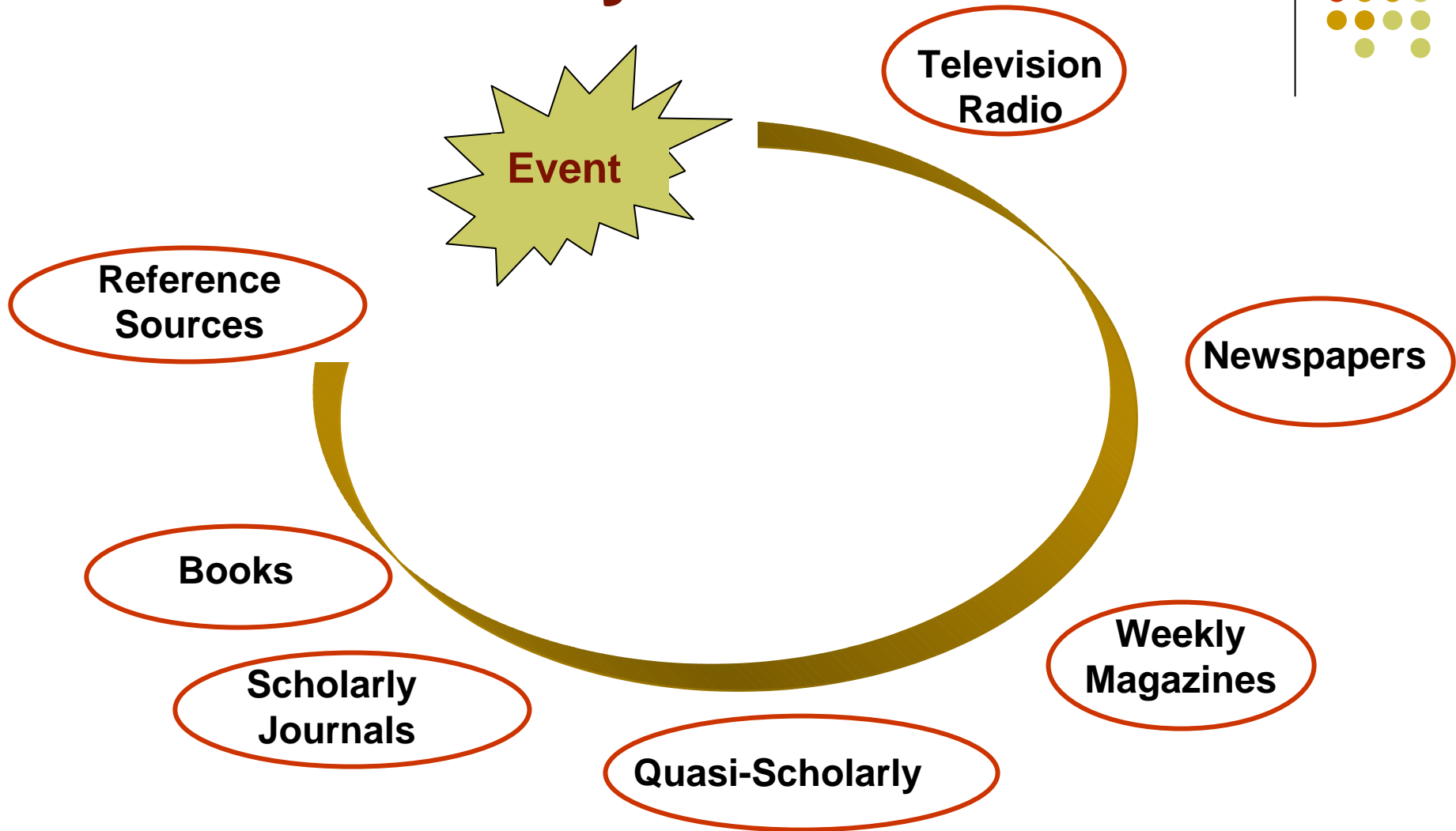
# Comments on the Approach



- Strengths
  - Comprehensive framework
  - Great for disseminating information to large audiences
  - Good for short sessions
- Weakness
  - Not a lot of time for hands-on experience
  - Doesn't often relate to the users needs (research strategies, information need, etc...)



# Information Cycle Model



*Note: From Information Cycle by Bichel, R., & Cheney, D., n.d.,  
retrieved March 10, 2004 from <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/instruction/infocycle.htm>. Adapted with permission.*



# Questions you might ask?

- How often is the media distributed?
- What is the audience for the media?
- What is the style & language used?
- What decisions were made regarding the content published?



# Instructional Goals (ACRL)

- Examines and **compares information from various sources** in order to evaluate reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias. (3.2.a)
- Recognizes the cultural, physical, or other **context within which the information was created** and understands the impact of context on interpreting the information. (3.2.d)

# Instructional Goals (ACRL) Continued



- Identifies the **purpose and audience** of potential resources (e.g., popular vs. scholarly, current vs. historical) (Outcome 1.2.d)
- Uses **various search systems** to retrieve information in a variety of formats. (Outcome 2.3.a)

# How can you use the model?





# Compare and contrast

- Congressional Record vs. New York Times
- FDA Consumer vs. Newsweek
- Trade publications vs Committee Prints and Reports (trade publications of congress).
- Scholarly Journals & Books
- Reference Sources

# Interpreting & Finding Government Information in Media



- How often is government information mentioned in different types of media?
- How do different media types use government information?
- How do you determine it is government information that they are using?
- How do you retrieve what they are citing?
- Did the author use the information correctly?

# Comments on the Approach



- Strengths
  - Great for focusing on “Current Events” and policy
  - Builds on the students previous knowledge
  - Potential for active learning rather than lecture
  - Can address users need
- Weaknesses
  - Not a perfect analogy
  - Students have to understand the metaphor